

# DON'T DO IT

## Sharing Insulin Pens and Other Injection Equipment Jeopardizes Patients

In 2009, in response to reports of improper use of insulin pens in hospitals, the Food and Drug Administration issued an alert for healthcare professionals reminding them that insulin pens are meant for use on a single person only and are not to be shared. Unfortunately, there have been continuing reports of persons placed at risk of bloodborne and bacterial pathogen transmission through sharing of insulin pens.

### A SIMPLE RULE

Injection equipment (e.g., insulin pens, needles and syringes) should **never** be used for more than one person.



### About the Safe Injection Practices Coalition

The Safe Injection Practices Coalition (SIPC) is a partnership of healthcare-related organizations led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that was formed to promote safe injection practices in all U.S. healthcare settings. The SIPC has developed the One & Only Campaign – a public health education and awareness campaign – aimed at both healthcare providers and patients to advance and promote safe injection practices.

For more information,  
please visit:

[www.ONEandONLYcampaign.org](http://www.ONEandONLYcampaign.org)

# BE AWARE DON'T SHARE



## ONE INSULIN PEN, ONLY ONE PERSON



What Every  
Healthcare Professional  
Needs To Know

## Recommendations for Safe Insulin Pen Use

Protection from infection is a basic expectation anywhere healthcare is delivered. Use of insulin pens and other injection equipment for more than one person poses unacceptable risks and should be considered a “never” event.

- Insulin pens and other injection equipment containing multiple doses of medication are meant for use on a single person only, and should never be used for more than one person, even when the needle is changed.
- Insulin pens and other injection equipment should be clearly labeled with the person's name or other identifying information to ensure that the correct pen is used only on the correct individual.
- Hospitals and other facilities should review their policies and educate their staff regarding safe use of insulin pens and similar devices.
- If reuse is identified, exposed persons should be promptly notified and offered appropriate follow-up including bloodborne pathogen testing.

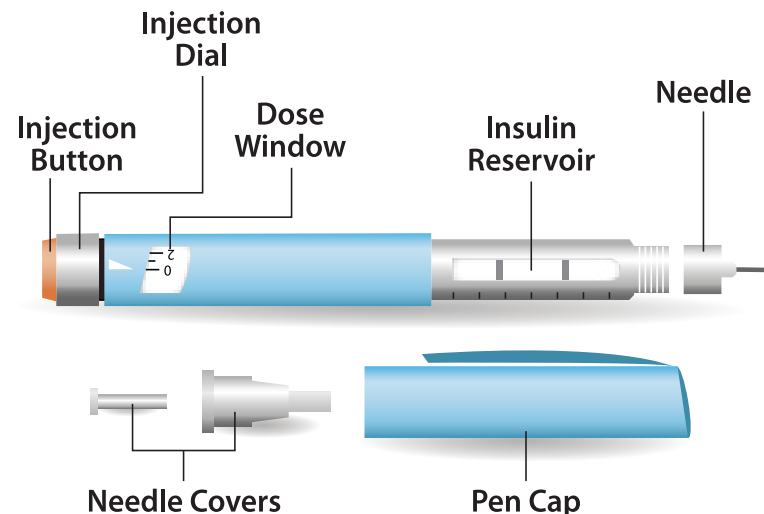
These recommendations apply to any setting where insulin pens and other injection equipment are used, including assisted living or residential care facilities, skilled nursing facilities, clinics, health fairs, shelters, detention facilities, senior centers, schools, and camps as well as licensed healthcare facilities.



## ONE INSULIN PEN, ONLY ONE PERSON

### Insulin Administration

Insulin pens are pen-shaped injector devices that contain a reservoir for insulin or an insulin cartridge. These devices are designed to permit self-injection. They are intended for single-person use.



In healthcare settings, these devices are often used by healthcare personnel to administer insulin to patients. Insulin pens are designed to be used for a single person multiple times, using a new needle for each injection.

Back flow of blood into the insulin reservoir can occur during an injection. This creates a risk of bloodborne and bacterial pathogen transmission if the pen is used for more than one person, even when the needle is changed.

The Safe Injection Practices Coalition created an easy to use check list for facilities. Similar to a risk assessment, the list contains the necessary components of injection safety for facilities to quickly assess their practices.

**A copy of the checklist can be found at:**  
**[www.cdc.gov/injectionsafety/Checklist](http://www.cdc.gov/injectionsafety/Checklist)**

| Injection Safety   | Practices Performed | If Person is Not Documented for Vaccination |
|--|---------------------|---|
| Insulin pens are prepared using aseptic technique in a clean area free from contamination or contact with blood, body fluids or contaminated equipment.                                  | Yes No              |   |
| Needles and syringes are used for only one patient (this includes manufacturer prefilled syringes and cartridge devices such as insulin pens).   | Yes No              |   |
| The rubber septum on a medication vial is disinfected with alcohol prior to piercing.  | Yes No              |   |
| Medication vials are entered with a new needle and a new septum, even when obtaining additional doses for the same patient.  | Yes No              |   |
| Single-dose (single-use) medication vials, ampules, and bags or bottles of intravenous solution are used for only one patient.   | Yes No              |   |
| Medication administration tubing and connectors are used for only one patient.   | Yes No              |   |
| Multi-dose vials are dated by HCP when they are first opened and discarded within 28 days unless the manufacturer specifies a different shorter or longer date for that opened vial.     | Yes No              |   |
| Never use a common needle or syringe to draw from the same multi-dose vial for multiple patients on the same or different units.   | Yes No              |   |
| Multi-dose vials are dedicated to individual patients whenever possible.   | Yes No              |   |
| Multi-dose vials to be used for more than one patient are kept in a centralized medication area (e.g., operating room, patient room, etc.) and do not enter the individual patient room. | Yes No              |   |
| Never use multi-dose vials to draw medication for multiple patients on the same or different units.  | Yes No              |   |

RESOURCES  
Checklist: <http://www.cdc.gov/injectionsafety/insulin-use-checklist-01-2015.pdf>  
Guidance for Injection Practices for Outpatient Settings: <http://www.cdc.gov/injectionsafety/outpatient-guidance-for-injection-practices-01-2015.pdf>  
<http://www.cdc.gov/injectionsafety/Checklist>  
[www.oneandonlycampaign.org](http://www.oneandonlycampaign.org)